

Message Text

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42

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 FBO-02 A-01 SY-04 ARAE-00 RSC-01 SNM-02

/021 W

----- 071618

P R 171605Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6616

INFO DEA WASHDC

AMEMBASSY CARACAS

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 2 BOGOTA 531

SECSTATE FOR AMBASSADOR VANCE; DEA FOR EO/CUSACK

EO 11652: NA

TAGS: SNAR

SUBJ: OFFICE SPACE FOR BOGOTA DISTRICT OFFICE

REF: CARACAS 331, 10 JAN 75

1. SUMMARY: PRIOR TO THE VISIT OF THE DEA REGIONAL ADMIN OFFICER, WE WERE UNDER THE IMPRESSION THAT DEA HAD MADE A FIRM COMMITMENT TO RENT THE OFFICE SPACE IN THE BAVARIA BLDG IN ORDER TO HOUSE ADEQUATELY ITS INCREASING STAFF. UNLESS THE PROBLEMS RAISED BY THE DEA REGIONAL OFFICE CAN BE OVERCOME AT THE WASHINGTON LEVEL OVER THE NEXT FEW DAYS, WE WILL BE FORCED TO RELINQUISH THE SPACE IN THE BAVARIA BLDG AND RULE THAT NO NEW DEA PERSONNEL CAN BE ASSIGNED TO BOGOTA PENDING THE LOCATION OF NEW QUARTERS. IT IS OUR OPINION THAT THE PROBLEMS RAISED ARE ROUTINE MATTERS WHICH ACCOMPANY ANY RELOCATION, COULD BE EASILY RESOLVED, AND NEED NOT DELAY DEA'S MOVE. END SUMMARY.

2. PRIOR TO MR MERRELL'S VISIT, PLANNING FOR THE DEA MOVE WAS PROCEEDING WELL WITH THE COOPERATION OF ALL CONCERNED. THE REFTTEL LEAVES OUT PERTINENT FACTS AND MISDESCRIBES THE POSITION OF THE EMBASSY. A RECAPITULATION IS THEREFORE NECESSARY.

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A) AS EXPLAINED IN PREVIOUS COMMUNICATIONS, THE APPROVED

INCREASE IN PERSONNEL FOR THE DEA OFFICE IN BOGOTA MADE IT NECESSARY TO HOUSE THE NARCOTICS INTERDICTION TEAM IN OTHER QUARTERS, SINCE THERE WAS NO WAY TO PROVIDE EXPANDED OFFICE SPACE IN THE CHANCERY BUILDING.

B) THE AMBASSADOR EXPLAINED THIS TO THE SAIC WHO ACCEPTED THE FACT AND SUBSEQUENTLY DEA WASH ALSO ACCEPTED THIS NECESSITY.

C) AFTER INVESTIGATION OF VARIOUS POSSIBILITIES, DEA INFORMED US THAT IT HAD DECIDED TO RENT ONE HALF OF THE 17TH FLOOR OF THE BAVARIA BUILDING PRESENTLY OCCUPIED BY AID. AT THE AMB'S REQUEST AND IN THE SPIRIT OF COOPERATION, AID AGREED TO CONTINUE TO PAY RENT ON SPACE IT NO LONGER NEEDED IN ORDER THAT DEA WOULD NOT LOSE THIS EXCELLENT LOCATION. AID HAS NOT ASKED FOR REIMBURSEMENT FOR THIS ASSISTANCE.

D) AGAIN, IN A SPIRIT OF COOPERATION, THE EMBASSY'S ADMIN SECTION WORKED CLOSELY WITH THE DEA TO OVERCOME THE PROBLEMS ATTENDANT ON ANY TRANSFER FROM ONE LOCATION TO ANOTHER. THE SAIC AND THE ADMIN SECTION SEPARATELY INFORMED THE CHARGE THAT MATTERS WERE PROGRESSING SMOOTHLY AND PROBLEMS WERE YIELDING TO COMMON EFFORT. WE WERE PLEASED TO RECEIVE THE TELEGRAM (DEA 253 OF 8 JAN 75) FROM DEA HQ PROVIDING \$21,000 FOR THE NEW OFFICE.

3. UNFORTUNATELY, THE VISIT FROM DEA REGIONAL HQ INTERVENED. IN SPITE OF OUR BEST EFFORTS TO EXPLAIN THE MUTUAL PROGRESS WE HAD MADE TOWARDS SOLVING THE PROBLEMS OF SECURITY AND COMMUNICATION, WE WERE APPARENTLY UNABLE TO PENETRATE. REGARDING THE FUNDING, WE EXPLAINED THAT THE POST HAD NO FUNDS TO HELP DEFRAY THE COST OF THE MOVE BUT HE WAS CERTAINLY WELCOME TO DISCUSS THIS WITH THE DEPT. OUR ONLY CONCERN WAS TO ACCOMPLISH THE NECESSARY MOVE AS EXPEDITIOUSLY AS POSSIBLE AND TO PROVIDE AS MUCH ASSISTANCE AS WE COULD TO DEA TO PERMIT THEM TO FUNCTION EFFICIENTLY. IN THREE SEPARATE MEETINGS WITH CHARGE, RSO AND ADMIN OFFICER AND GSO, MR MERRELL STRESSED HIS CONCERN WITH SECURITY AND RENOVATION PROBLEMS CONNECTED WITH MOVE TO BAVARIA BUILDING. ON EACH OCCASION, EMB OFFICERS POINTED OUT THAT IN VIEW PRESENT FUNDING CRISIS, THERE WAS NO WAY THIS POST COULD ASSIST WITH FUNDING. GSO SPECIFICALLY SUGGESTED TO MR MERRELL THAT HE TAKE THIS MATTER UP IMMEDIATELY WITH THE TWO CONCERNED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WASHINGTON AGENCIES, BUT STATED THAT POST BELIEVED THAT THESE PROBLEMS COULD BE OVERCOME. SECURITY OFFICER, NOTING EXISTENCE OF VAULT ON 15TH FLOOR (TWO FLOORS DOWN FROM SPACE OFFERED TO DEA) INDICATED TO MR MERRELL HIS BELIEF THAT DEA COULD MOVE TO NEW QUARTERS IMMEDIATELY, USING EXISTING VAULT. WHILE THIS MIGHT BE INCONVENIENT, RSO NOTED THAT THIS WOULD MEET SECURITY REQUIREMENTS FOR STORAGE OF SENSITIVE MATERIAL. DURING PREVIOUS DISCUSSIONS WITH AID EXEC OFFICER, HE OFFERED SPACE IN THIS VAULT

TO DEA WHILE CONSTRUCTION OF 17TH FLOOR VAULT WAS COMPLETED.

4. GSO WAS REQUESTED TO OBTAIN ESTIMATES ON COSTS OF SECURITY AND OTHER RENOVATIONS FOR AVAILABLE SPACE. IF DEA WERE TO MOVE TO BAVARIAWE FOLLOWING ARE ESTIMATED FUNDS NECESSARY FOR COMPLETION RENOVATIONS. (ESTIMATED TIME NECESSARY FOR CONSTRUCTION IS ONE MONTH)

A) SECURITY MODIFICATIONS, INCLUDING CONSTRUCTION OF VAULT, IRON BARS ON WINDOW WHERE NECESSARY, AND MASONRY WALL BETWEEN NEW OFFICES AND REMAINDER OF BUILDING (EMB HAS VAULT DOOR WHICH INTENDED DONATE TO PROJECT)..... US DOLS 2,500

B) STEEL FIRE DOOR..... \$160

C) CONSTRUCTION OF PARTITIONS.....\$1,000

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 FBO-02 A-01 RSC-01 ARAE-00 SY-04 SNM-02

/021 W

----- 071709

P R 171605Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6617

INFO DEA WASHDC

AMEMBASSY CARACAS

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 2 OF 2 BOGOTA 531

)D CARPET: IF PRESENT CARPET USED BUT ADDITIONAL AREAS WHICH NEED IT RECARPETED.....\$500

CARPET (CONT'D): IF ALL NEW CARPET INSTALLED THROUGHOUT...\$4,000

D) COMPLETE REPAINTING.....\$300

TOTAL ESTIMATED COST (IF PRESENT CARPET USED).....\$4,460

TOTAL ESTIMATED COST (INCLUDING NEW CARPET).....\$7,960

5. REGARDING THE ALLEGATION IN PARA 4 OF REFTEL TO THE EFFECT THAT THE EMB HAS DIRECTED THAT "OTHER EMBASSY ELEMENTS" SHARE THE SPACE SELECTED FOR DEA AND THAT THIS DECISION WILL REQUIRE THAT THESE OTHER ELEMENTS SHARE THE COST, WE WOULD POINT OUT THE FOLLOWING:

A) OBVIOUSLY THOSE WHO WORK TOGETHER ON NARCOTICS SHOULD HAVE CONTIGUOUS OFFICE SPACE IF AT ALL POSSIBLE. THIS WAS A PREMISE SHARED BY DEA AS WELL AS THE "OTHER EMBASSY ELEMENTS". THE EMBASSY "DIRECTIVE" THAT "OTHER EMBASSY ELEMENTS" SHARE THE DEA OFFICE SPACE CAME ABOUT ONLY BECAUSE MR MERRELL INFORMED THE CHARGE THAT DEA WOULD REQUIRE THAT DEA PERSONNEL BE HOUSED IN A CLOSED-OFF SPACE SECURED BY A LOCKED DOOR WITH THE AMBASSADOR'S NARCOTICS COORDINATOR ON THE OUTSIDE OF THIS COMPOUND. THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CHARGE REPLIED THAT WHILE HE UNDERSTOOD THE NEED FOR CONTIGUITY OF DEA PERSONNEL THAT, AD REFERENDUM TO THE AMBASSADOR, HE DID NOT BELIEVE THAT SUCH AN ARRANGEMENT REFLECTED THE CLOSE AND CORDIAL WORKING RELATIONSHIP ACHIEVED AT THIS POST. IT WAS AGREED AT THAT TIME WITH THE SAIC'S PARTICIPATION THAT THIS WAS A MINOR PROBLEM THAT WE COULD EASILY WORK OUT. THE AMBASSADOR HAS CONFIRMED THAT HE WILL NOT ACCEPT AN ARRANGEMENT THAT WOULD EXCLUDE PART OF THE NARCOTICS TEAM FROM READY AND INFORMAL ACCESS TO THE DEA CONTINGENT.

B) AID WILL PAY ITS PROPORTIONAL SHARE FOR THE OFFICES OCCUPIED BY ITS OFFICERS AS MR MERRELL COULD HAVE ASCERTAINED BY INQUIRING.

6. IN OCTOBER OF LAST YEAR, AID INFORMED THE EMBASSY OF ITS INTENTION TO GIVE UP THE OFFICE SPACE IN QUESTION AS REDUCTIONS IN PERSONNEL MADE IT SUPERFLUOUS AND THE MANAGEMENT OF THE BAVARIA BLDG WAS ANXIOUS TO HOUSE ITS OWN PEOPLE THERE. THE EMBASSY, RECOGNIZING THAT THE CONTEMPLATED INCREASE IN DEA PERSONNEL WOULD REQUIRE THE MOVE, ASKED AID NOT TO GIVE UP THE SPACE. AID AGREED AND THUS FOR SEVERAL MONTHS HAS PAID RENT IN ORDER TO SAVE THIS SPACE FOR DEA.

7. GIVEN THE PROBLEMS, REAL OR IMAGINED, RAISED BY THE DEA REGIONAL OFFICE, WE HAVE NO ALTERNATIVE OTHER THAN TO ADVISE AID TO RELINQUISH THE SPACE AS OF JANUARY 30. WE WILL CONTINUE TO ASSIST THE DEA OFFICE IN ANY WAY POSSIBLE WITH THEIR SPACE PROBLEMS BUT WE DOUBT THAT ANY OFFICE SPACE AS SUITABLE AS THE BAVARIA WILL BE FOUND. RATHER THAN WASTE MORE TIME, MONEY AND EFFORT, WE SUGGEST THAT MR MERRELL COME TO BOGOTA TO LOCATE PROPER OFFICE SPACE FOR DEA. UNTIL SUCH SPACE IS FOUND, THE AMBASSADOR HAS DIRECTED THAT NO ADDITIONAL DEA PERSONNEL SHOULD BE ASSIGNED

TO BOGOTA. THE EMBASSY REITERATES ITS CONVICTION THAT THE BAVARIA
REPRESENTS THE BEST AND MOST CONVENIENT SPACE AVAILABLE IN
BOGOTA AND EMPHASIZES THAT THE COSTS INVOLVED IN THE MOVE AND
REFURBISHMENT ARE IN ALL PROBABILITY MINISCULE COMPARED TO THE
COSTS OF LOCATING AND PREPARING SPACE THAT HAS NEVER BEFORE BEEN
OCCUPIED BY US GOVT OFFICES.

VAKY

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Approved on Date:
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Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
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Margaret P. Grafeld
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05 JUL 2006

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TAGS: SNAR, VE, DEA
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